

July 2011 Overview

Klamath Backcountry Trail Crew

Dani Nelson: Supervisor

Zombies, Orchids and Taxidermy

The Crew was camped on the edge of a meadow with a thick stand of evergreens surrounding it. Some odd anomaly had covered the branches with hanging moss, and fog sometimes lingered for days. It's not the place we would have chosen for our defense, but it was the place destiny had chosen for us. It started as a fun conversation to whittle away some of our stagnant hours. "What would you do in a Zombie invasion?" There were good ideas and bad ideas, but mostly we reflected on survival. Our egos were plump with our physical prowess and ability to wield an abundance of tools. We were sure that our already-formed crew dynamics would work in our favor. Little did we know that when it came time to fight, it would be our will to conquer all foes that would bring us through as individuals and back together again stronger than before. It was soon after our arrival at Poker Flat that we started to notice the eerie energy in the air. There was something about the stillness that was unsettling. As we were completely cut off from the world (and the government was keeping the localized outbreak top secret), we had no idea that Happy Camp population had been infiltrated by the Zombie virus called solanum. Visitors who came in looked piqued and unhealthy. We saw fewer and fewer people from the Forest Service. Even the animals seemed to have gone into hiding. We were so focused on our work and community, that it took us a while to notice that something seemed off. It wasn't until the latter point of the month that the real battle started. In the middle of the night (on a Monday!), the meadow was filled with noise. A car came spinning to a halt on the gravel road. Screams were heard through the blaring music. We naively thought it was some idiot townies out partying. We soon found that wasn't the case. A few corpsmembers emerged from their tents to go and talk to the noise makers. We were stunned to hear other shouts join the initial ruckus. Our smallest corps member, Michelle Garris, was able to take down the first zombies to come in contact with us. The crew was horrified as the mess, and in awe of the nimble thinking and strength of our tiny hero. After this night, the battle was on. We were fighting the zombies from all sides. We continued to work, because we thought town would only bring trouble. Besides, we needed to keep ourselves busy and strong. Zombies were constantly trying to turn the crew into mindless, brain-eating monsters. Sometimes we would have to spend our entire lunch just bashing zombie heads in and then getting back to work. Sometimes chores would be interrupted with a field suddenly full of groaning, and people would have to break away from the dish line to take care of what was soon becoming a general annoyance rather than a terrifying experience. We started having competitions amongst our night watch to see who could most creatively take care of any midnight zombies. By the end of the month, the government sent up some schmucks from a "secret" agency to ask us questions, and let us know that there was not a problem and "never had been one." We know differently. We survived it.

Zombie Survival Game: Created by Bart Novak

Supplies Needed: One handkerchief per person

Remember: NO Running!!!! To keep it safe for the crew, keep it to a fast walk.

How to play:

1. Decide on some boundaries. You don't want an area bigger than 50ft x 50ft.
2. Everyone needs to have a handkerchief in their back pocket.
3. Have someone choose 2 people to be zombies. (No one else should know who they are!)
4. Have everyone stand in a big circle. When you say go, everyone should start milling around within the preset boundaries.
5. After about 15 seconds, one of your preset zombies should pull out their handkerchief and become a zombie. Zombies cannot bend their arms or legs. The zombie should immediately start trying to pull handkerchiefs out of people's back pockets. After about 30 more seconds, the second zombie should do the same.
6. Once your handkerchief is pulled out of your pocket, you also become a zombie (cannot bend elbows or knees) and start trying to pull out people's handkerchiefs.
7. The last person with a handkerchief in their pocket wins! They are the lone survivor.

Remember: NO RUNNING!!!! ONLY fast walking.

For extra fun, people who are zombies should moan and put on their best zombie face.

CURRICULUM: We had a great month of classes with a great mix of guest teachers and corpsmember-lead classes. Russ Juncal was amazing as he lead us through a great poetry reading the ended with us setting off several grease bombs (or disposing of bacon grease if you prefer). He also hiked to a ridge with us and taught us about conservation, geology and life itself. Tim Barnette, wildlife biologist, came up to teach us about animals in our area, how they find them and let us all pass around his taxidermy animals! John Grenbaum, fisheries biologist, came to teach us about the Klamath watershed and fish habitat. Thanks so much to all of our guests and their awesome classes. Bart Novak taught us about zombie survival techniques (thank goodness), Emily Tornroos taught us about gratitude and lead the crew in a thank you card exercise, and Jordan Anderson taught us with a critical eye a great art class. Thanks everyone!

PRODUCTION: We ruled the Youngs Valley/Poker Flat trail, Kelly Lake Trail and Black Butte Trail.
Yes!!!!!!!

FROM THE CREW:

Ricky: I want to give a couple shout outs to my center, "Pomona Satellite." I'm giving a shout out to my buddies Henry, Picita, Jesus, Manny, and my other buddy who is in Stanislaus right now, Denny Diaz. All my homies who I work with and I enjoy working with. I also want to thank all the C1s who I especially respect for their time and efforts at being a great example of men and women. Thanks to all -Ricky Mc Henry

Filipo: This... is... MADNESS!!!!

Will's word: Well jeeze what can I say? I could write up some words that tells what this season has taught me, but it is impossible for anyone who hasn't gone through this to actually understand what has been experienced or felt out here. One's personality goes through the philosophy of Jeet Kun Do to make it through this season. Absorb all that is necessary and discard what is not NEEDED. Mental and physical battles are fought every day, not only with the differences of others but our weaknesses as well. Those joining the program solely for the gain of more money in their future have failed to rise to the challenges of the first month. The real treasure we are given is wisdom. Wisdom of surviving with little necessities, living everyday of the week with all the people that you work with and forming a unique bond with them that is too difficult to describe the feelings. Another lesson learned is understanding that life is easier when you go with the flow instead of constantly going upstream. Even though I'm far from home, I know that I'm not alone. Hikes, nature and books are there to entertain cuz electronics are no longer to be obtained. Every day we are gradually becoming strong while forming relationships made with unbreakable bonds. Everyday peeking the tallest hills because we are the ones who are given the unstoppable drill!

Bart: G-wooOOD!

Julia: Hey Book Barn, it's official: I LIVE IN THE WOODS!

Sam: So, uh...waterfalls yep

Michelle: Just want to give a shout out to Inland Center! Especially to those also out in the backcountry. Paul in Shasta, Javi in Yosemite, and Efrain in Kings... we are awesome :)

Benton: John on the Stan, what's up man? hope you're kickin ass on the trails! Have a bomb last 2 months everyone, it's going to fly by, enjoy every second. "Santa Maria Satellite" missing CREW 8!!! See you guys real soon (and yes Randall we have to walk all the way out there).